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EXTRACTS

FROM A

TEACHER'S OBSERVATIONS

ON

SCHOOL GOVERNMENT,

WITH

INTRODUCTORY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS.

BY

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LOCAL SUPERINTENDENT.

ADDRESSED TO THE SCHOOL AUTHORITIES AND SCHOOL POPU-
LATION OF THE COUNTY OF WELLINGTON, N.R.

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INTRODUCTORY.

I have thought I might do no small service to Teachers and their Scholars, and to the parents of these Scholars, by collecting and arranging for their perusal and reflection, some observations on School Discipline to be found interspersed through two works of a recent writer. Comparatively few of those who read these pages might ever come across them otherwise.* Some well known facts of a nature very trying to all Teachers, are adverted to and commented on in such a way as to give them a better chance of being seriously considered by those who have the ability to remedy them, than if they formed part of what might be looked on as an attack against individuals, and which, for that reason would probably be resented and indignantly rejected. Without feeling it necessary to give an opinion on some of the writer's views, or considering myself bound to endorse every one of his remarks, I believe they will in general commend themselves to my readers, as being remarkably judicious and highly practical. The belief that counsel, such as is given, is wanted and will be welcomed by some who have a right to look for advice of the kind at my hands—added to the conviction that it is so much better than anything strictly original would have been, is all the apology with which I think it necessary to preface the writer's remarks. It is true that they have a primary reference to private schools, and to schools taught rather by *Masters* than by *Mistresses*;—attended exclusively by *boys*;—and not under the control of a Board of School Trustees;—but, granting all this, there is, I think, sufficient common ground to render what he says, in most respects, suitable for ourselves.

“The Teacher's work is far from being so common-place and ignoble as some people think:—on the contrary, it is on which calls into exercise every nerve and sinew of mental power, and requires the use of the peculiar talents of nearly every other honorable profession. FIRST:—We must be practical Statesmen; we must be able to organize and legislate—we must make constitutions for our little empires, and laws which will not only protect the weak against the strong but

* A Book about Boys, by A. R. Hope: (reprint) Boston, 1869.
A Book about Dominies, ditto ditto ditto

will regulate and encourage labor, and punish idleness ; thus solving the highest problems of political economy. AGAIN,—We must be able to drill and discipline our Lilliputian Armies, to give the word of command with decision and promptitude ;—to say "Go," to a boy in such a manner that he goes without further question—we require skill and knowledge to handle our columns.—we must take care that our officers obey our orders ; that our divisions move in due regularity—that the works are not assailed before the outposts are carried. We must be Lawyers too, and possess the judicial faculty in a high degree. We are daily called upon to preside at criminal trials in which we conduct the prosecution, agree upon the verdict and pronounce the sentence. And this we have to do upon evidence which can never be quite relied upon, and often, upon no evidence at all,—for, except in very heinous cases, the right minded Master will encourage his boys not to allow themselves to be subpoenaed against one another, and will, above all, discountenance the practice of laying informations. Our conscience would be like flint, if we could use this tremendous power hastily or unjustly and not feel remorse. It is a good rule for us to cherish a reluctance to condemn, and, to uphold the good old maxim, that an accused person is innocent, till he be proved guilty. But to know proof from suspicion is sometimes hard.

"Who can deny however, that it is the faults of parents rather than of their children, that the conscientious Schoolmaster, has, in too many cases, to do battle with ? It has been very often my experience, that the father won't take the trouble to manage his boys, and the mother can't ; and so for want of a little wise and wholesome restraint, these boys grow up insubordinate, conceited and selfish, a curse to themselves and to others. The parents refuse to believe that their pets can do wrong ; they uphold this boy's goodness of heart, and that boy's honesty, with a pertinacity which astonishes the unprejudiced observers of these young gentlemen's conduct. And even, if they are obliged by the stern logic of facts, to recognize that their darlings are not all that they ought to be, they find comfortable phrases with which to palliate the harsh disclosures, and save their beloved ones from the consequences which ought to attend all deviation from the right path. One, when ill-tempered and selfish is declared to have a "peculiar disposition," and it is discovered that severity does not answer with another—if haply he is discovered pilfering. An affectionate parent once informed me with regard to a new pupil, that I must not be surprised to find that his boy had

"a strong imagination." This, I very soon discovered to be his way of putting the unpleasant fact, that the boy was the most inveterate liar I ever met with. There is no straw of sentiment so small, that consanguineous affection will not seize hold of it to escape the unpleasant, though sometimes necessary duty, of dragging the child out of the way in which he should not go.

"Some parents have not time to train their own children properly; and even if all had time, they have not all ability for it. Granting the ability to rule, the weakness of human nature often prevents them from being strictly just to their own children. How many parents have I not seen blind to the faults of bad children! How difficult to open their eyes! and even when undeceived, the average parent of the present day seldom acts with due severity,—either because he has not courage to do so, or because he is imbued with the new-fashioned "rule of love" principles. It is certainly hard for a parent to punish his own child justly:—but if parents are unable or unwilling to manage their own children, they might do more to countenance and assist the Master upon whom the task falls. There are some who send their sons to school with as little thought as they send their foals to grass; and, the thing once done, seem much more concerned for the welfare of the latter than the former.

"But just as likely the parents take too much interest in our work. They keep a jealous eye over what we are teaching, which they of course, know more about than we do. They discover that their boys are not getting on fast enough, and remove them to the care of some other Master whom we heartily wish joy of them. Now we are all bigoted believers in ourselves, and have no faith in the systems of others; so it is natural in us to feel some real concern for a boy who is thus deprived of the enormous advantage of our teaching, and given over to be ruined, as we think, by an inferior workman. So this is one of the chief annoyances of a Schoolmaster, and in the present state of things, I fear we must just bear it with as little complaint as possible. I suppose parents must have some interest in the education of their children, and must be allowed to take whatever steps seem best to them, to secure their being brought up to be wise men:—only one can't help wishing sometimes, that the parents were a little wiser themselves. Of course, this boy's father and mother have a right to take him away from my school and send him to another Master; but as I think I am getting the boy's young ideas to shoot in a most satisfactory way;—and as I consider the master he is sent to, to be ignorant and conceited and remember the day when he

was himself a pupil of mine, and how he blundered, I can't help feeling annoyed by the change. Then the parents interfere with our discipline and question our infallibility. If a boy has told a downright falsehood, and I give him a due flogging for it,—the chances are, that I have his mother down on me next day. Her boy never told a lie; I must be mistaken; he must have been cruelly slandered;—in fact, I have been acting like a brute and a tyrant. These doctrines find favor with the young gentleman himself, and of course my authority over him, is to a great extent, gone.

"Boys can't be properly trained without a wholesome amount of due restraint and correction, but it should be our care that this be made as small and as little galling as possible. It should be—but is it always? For instance, I know a school where the boys are troubled by a chronic and constant state of humanitarian punishment. Mostly all of them are kept inwardly groaning from morning to night, under a shower of vexations impositions and detentions, which don't do much in the way of deterring them from mischief, but a great deal in the way of spoiling their handwriting and souring their temper. I once ventured to hint to the master of this school, that it would be a good thing if he were to clear the air with an occasional thunderbolt in the shape of a slight flogging, which, in my experience, has more influence on the minds, and less on the spirits of boys than any other kind of punishment. By punishing in this way, I suggested, a boy who hadn't learned his lesson, or had played in school, might have a fair chance of learning his lesson next time, or of playing at the proper time and place. Yes, we may correct our boys if they deserve it, always with justice, discretion and sympathy, and they will not be much troubled, but will take it all in good part, knowing in their hearts that we do well—but, let us take heed that we add not to their troubles over much, by hasty and foolish decrees, by cross looks and scornful words, by unjust actions and unkind restraints, by over strictness and over indulgence—yea, by allowing them to sin and thus causing them to sorrow.

"I have found that boys are very much as they are treated. If you are too easy and indulgent with them they will take the reins into their own hands, and lead you a pretty dance after them. If you are too strict and exacting they will become sly and cunning; but if you treat them with firmness and discretion you will have no difficulty with most. Boys appreciate being ruled like reasonable beings. They will obey a strong despot whose only law seems to them his temper and caprice; but they will obey with far more

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readiness and cheerfulness, a constitutional monarch, who shews them clearly how the principle of his rule is the common good of all. Boys know very well that they sometimes do wrong and deserve to be punished, and the discreet master will make good use of his knowledge. Furthermore he will not frown too severely on every little fault, but will keep his real thunderbolts for heinous sinners. He will say to his boys in effect: "I know that you are naturally prone to laugh and chatter, and play tricks, and make grimaces, in season and out of season; and you know that I am here to make you do something more useful though less agreeable at certain times and places; and you know too that if I did not make you do this, I should be a humbug. I know moreover, that you are willing enough to believe me, and to do as I wish you; but I know that you are unsteady of purpose and weak of memory; and therefore, when you forget or fail to obey me I shall feel myself under the necessity of stimulating your will and memory by some simple means. And I expect you, on the other hand, to take it all in good part, and to believe that it is no pleasure to me to see those little hands clenched in pain and those little lips working hard to repress your feelings. So, let us think no harm of each other, but both agree to hate and scorn whatever is mean, or foul, or dishonest, whether in man or boy." Such an appeal as this, will not be found to lack fitting response. And the advantage of ruling your boys on such principles will be some degree of mutual trust and kindly good will. The boys will not look upon you so much as their natural enemy but rather as a friend to whom they may tell their joys and sorrows and receive encouragement and sympathy. You will find that you can best put down certain forms of misbehaviour, by warning your boys against them and asking them to fix their own punishment if they forget the warning. You will find that if a boy tell you a deliberate lie his companions will at once betray him by a hearty groan of disgust. You will find that if you have forgotten to inflict a certain punishment which you had ordered, the culprits themselves will not hesitate to remind you. You will find a boy asking to be punished when you are inclined to let him off,—“and then I'm not likely to do it again.” You will find that boys take a pride in your justice and severity, and value your praise and blame more keenly than you might suppose it possible. Why, the severest punishment I ever inflict, is not to speak to a boy for some days. This is reserved for lying and such like offences; and if the culprit be not hardened you may see him with downcast looks, hanging about me, or placing

himself in any way, day after day, in hopes of one word as a sign of returning favor.

"The essence of my system of discipline would be a judicious control, not inconsistent with a due measure of freedom, nor such as to prevent a boy's nature from healthily developing itself. I would make as few laws as possible, but would take care that they were rigorously observed. I would try to teach the boys under my care to take a pride in my system of discipline, remembering that the tone of feeling among themselves will always be more powerful than the anathemas of any master. I would, on no account allow their parents to interfere with my regulations. If a boy obeyed me,—well and good ;—if he did not he should be punished ; if that had no effect on him, he should leave the school. In fact, the *ideal* master, whose picture I try to answer, and God knows how much harder I should try, is a man possessed of all good qualities, and especially of those which will gain him the obedience and affection of his pupils. He is wise without being pedantic, firm though not harsh, active though not meddling. He thoroughly understands the nature of boys, and is well acquainted with all their tricks ; but he knows when to see, and when seeing, not to seem to see. He conducts himself towards them in such a way as to invite their friendship, and, at the same time to check familiarity. He shows a warm interest in all their pursuits and fills them with part of his own enthusiasm for whatever things are lovely and useful and of good report. He will have a better chance of gaining influence over his pupils if he take some interest in their pursuits out of school, which, after all, in a boy's eyes, are the most important interests of life, and thus he may become truly the ruler, the king of boys, the fountain of honor amongst them, the model of excellence. Then will he be obeyed readily, not servilely, by subjects who will fight for the honor of doing his bidding. Then will his kindly word of praise be thirsted for, and his censure will call forth shame and contempt. Then will he not be deceived and plotted against, because his boys will do everything by his advice or orders. Then will his companionship and presence be counted honor and happiness, his smiles will be waited for, his wants anticipated.

"I like to see boys playing at purely boyish games, in a boyish way, with companions of their own age, and with a spirit shewing that they play voluntarily and not as a task. But I like to see these games kept within their proper bounds, and not allowed to encroach upon matters of more importance. It is not a good lesson to teach that the business of life is to play, a lesson which too many boys learn at

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school, and carry into practice with a vengeance, when they grow older. Boys are so fond of fun, that they are apt to forget all laws, Divine and human, for its sake; and hence, they will delight in clever deceptions, and successful hoaxes, taking no shame, and thinking no ill. This is a painful truth about boys, and a point on which their moral sense must be gradually enlightened. For my part, it grieves me to see truth made light of, even in jest; but I am persuaded, that enough justice is not done to boys, in the way of guiding rather than driving their moral instincts. You can teach boys a great deal more than you do, if you try harder, and set more wisely about it. They won't care to do wrong if you can show them that they will be just as happy in doing right. But if you set your face as a flint against all kinds of fun, your pupils come to look upon amusement and wrong doing as synonymous terms, and as amusement is a necessity of their nature, they suppose that wrong doing must be so also. So the good master should encourage and watch, and as much as is possible or advisable mix with the amusements of his boys, lest while he eats and drinks and takes his own pleasure apart, the devil comes unawares upon the flock and has his will among them.

"Boys have a great deal of natural faith, and it requires but little effort on my part to make them believe in my wisdom, and justice and dignity. Sometimes, passion may get the better of this faith, and they may call me hard names—always behind my back—but on the whole, they believe that they are far more likely to be in the wrong than I, and it is this belief which is the greatest power I have over them. I remember when I was a boy, that one of my own masters was like some others, harsh, capricious, unrelenting. He made no allowances, he punished without discrimination,—as often unjustly as justly. Well, we did not exactly love this man, but we revered him. We took all his harshness and cruelty as a matter of course, and fed with thankfulness upon the rare crumbs of human kindness, which from time to time, he flung us. We believed in him then, and such is the force of custom, that some of us believe in him to this day. Boys take a positive pride in a teacher who keeps a tight hold over them, and makes them stick to their work:—and such a man's strictness will not in the least stand in the way of his popularity if he be just and genial.

"But there is danger of our not only being dictatorial, but cruel and cross. The habit of fault-finding is dangerous to any man's sweetness of temper and peace of mind:—and it is a great part of our professional duty to find out and

correct faults. Daily and hourly we are not only tempted but compelled to rebuke and scold, and punish; and we should be more than mortal if we always exercised our functions with love and wisdom. Not long since one of my boys did something that he ought not to have done; and it was my sorrowful duty to send out the *fiat*, concerning him, that he should be punished.—He knew that he had done wrong, and that I was doing right, and he was not sullen nor snivelling, but made up his mind to endure as bravely as might be, what, in his little world, is the great evil of life. And then he came to me, modestly, trustfully, to tell me that it was all over, and that he had not cried, and that he was sorry. And I knew that he was speaking from his heart, and we settled that we would not do it again. And he was grateful that I forgave him so soon, and did not continue to reproach him, with what was at worst, a very venial fault, tho' a grave infringement of scholastic discipline. Then he dismissed the matter from his mind, and ran out to play. But I shall not forget it so soon, for I felt that if I had all the kingdoms of the earth, I would have given them to be as simple minded as that boy, as frank, as honest, as ready to forget pain and sorrow. And suddenly I remembered that I had wronged that very boy, and had not been so frank in confessing my fault. A day or two before I had made him lose his place in the class by mistake; and on discovering my error, had been ashamed to set it right, lest my boys should suspect that I was at any time inattentive and forgetful. And now I felt deeply, how mean my conduct seemed beside his. I am afraid some Schoolmasters will think that I took a step ruinous to the discipline of my school. For, when my boys came back from their play, I told them what a wrong and cowardly thing I had done. I told them that I was ashamed and sorry, and earnestly hoped both that I would never commit such a fault again, and that none of them would follow my example. I told them that I was no better than they, only perhaps a little wiser; and that,—man or boy,—each of us was daily tempted to be dishonest and a coward, and must wrestle with and conquer temptation if he would be good and happy. My boys for the moment, looked rather astonished at this confession, but I did not find that it diminished their respect for me. I have tried all along to understand the thoughts of my boys, to enter into their feelings, to sympathize with their joys and sorrows. Thus I may say with truth, that I have learned more among them, than I have taught.

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they little know how difficult and vexatious it often is for us to torment them, as I suppose they think we take a pleasure in doing. They little know how hard it sometimes is to frown and punish. They little know how often we cloud our own happiness in pronouncing sentence of boyish misery against them. They little think when we are doing a certain disagreeable part of our duty, that the smart sometimes lingers longer and sorer in our hearts, than in their skins. I am sure I have reproached myself for thrashing a boy, hours after the tears have dried from his eyes and he has forgotten all about it in a hearty romp. And sometimes, the pleasure of many of my afternoon walks has been spoiled by thoughts of the merry urchin whom I have left locked up in school, to ~~work~~ out or learn some dreary task. Nay, I have lain awake half the night, thinking of the punishment which it would be my duty to inflict next morning. We can't expect our boys to believe this I suppose; but surely older and wiser people ought to grant, that nature has not given us less kindly hearts than other men, and to appreciate the difficulty which we find in being cruel that we may be kind.

"There is in every physically and mentally healthy boy, a sort of latent energy, which irresistibly drives him to run, jump, laugh, make a noise, and otherwise give occasion to unsympathizing guardians to scold and punish. I admit the value of gradually teaching the young, thoughtfulness, and self control; but I cannot for one moment place this against the great danger of confounding in the youthful mind such faults, with the fruits of moral depravity; nor the equal risk of bottling up such energies to burst forth at length with more force, but in some less harmless direction.

"The truly wise educator will take care to let this latent energy of youth, have some natural vent, or if it becomes inconvenient in any particular form, will distinctly prohibit it in that form, and repress it under the head of disobedience: but will never forget, that to treat it as real sin, will only dim a boy's moral perceptions, lessening his respect for virtue and abhorrence of crime.

"In after years, when our boys are men, some of them, not the best, will talk of us with ridicule or even malice. But if we have done our duty, some will look back to our tyranny with love and gratitude, remembering sins that we helped them to conquer, and blessings, that we urged them to attain. And I for one, would not think my life wasted, if I hoped that I had saved one young soul from the curse of selfishness and deceit:—brought one young scholar to learn diligently in the school of God.

"Our work is a noble and a worthy one. But more, it is a happy work : it has pleasures that far out weigh its vexations. Many a ray of sunlight is thrown across our path by the pure thoughts and the kindly words—and the honest joys of boyhood. This very day as I was going to punish a timid shrinking boy, who had committed a grievous offence against my Medo-Persic laws,—his classmates begged him off, and by a large majority, agreed to learn an extra lesson if he were not punished. And lately, when I was going to punish a boy for an injury done to a companion that companion came to me privately, and entreated me to let him take the punishment instead. I and other masters could tell many such stories. Are not these things sunshine to our hearts? And when a boy has been naughty and is sorry, and bears his punishment manfully and meekly, and listens to my reproof; and does not sulk nor spite me, and tells me that he will not do it again, and I know that he is speaking sincerely, is this not good and happy?"

"And sometimes a father or mother comes to talk with me about one of my pupils, and is not supercilious nor prejudiced, nor blindly affectionate, but treats me with respect and consideration, and believes that I am doing my best for the boy, and is grateful to me for it and enters into my difficulties, and shews readiness to aid my efforts, will this not comfort and strengthen me in my work?—or,—when men who were once my boys, and worried and vexed me, and were whipped and rebuked by me, come back to thank me for what I have done for them, will not that make me happy? It is a pleasant thing to know that, even if they do not appreciate your interest in them as boys, there are very few men who have other than a kindly feeling towards their old tyrants. I believe that only bad men look back with hate upon the strictest of schoolmasters. I have met once, and, thank Heaven, only once, with a man who spoke bitterly and spitefully of a highly respected Schoolmaster, who had given him a well deserved thrashing many years before. I did not seek that individual's further acquaintance.

"And it is sweet and joyful for us, at all times, to be able to rejoice over boys, who are gradually improving, taking an interest in their studies, coming even to love them; overcoming bad habits, trying to do right. This is what we may see daily if we open our eyes:—and if we see other boys doing ill, we should not grieve overmuch, but hope and pray that God, in His own good time, and by other lips than our's, may teach them those lessons which we cannot make them learn."

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CONCLUDING REMARKS.

In transcribing the foregoing observations, the writer's precise words have been adhered to, with the exception of a very few trivial verbal alterations, which, for my purpose appeared to be improvements: indeed the phraseology, even when it was slightly sarcastic, was too much in keeping with the pointed nature of the remarks to allow of my meddling with it.

As there are some peculiar grievances however, connected with our own Common Schools, a few remarks on some of them, may not be in appropriate here.

I. The uncertain tenure of the office of *Teacher*. This may arise from various causes: for example—the annual change in the composition of the Board of School Trustees, one of the members retiring—difference of opinion between the two Trustees who remain in office, as to re-engagement of the Teacher—the prevalent practice of lending too ready an ear, to disparaging remarks regarding the Teacher—circulated freely in the shape of complaint with little enquiry into their correctness, and leading the Trustees to believe that he is not giving satisfaction, and cannot therefore be doing his duty:—the superabundance of young Teachers without experience, and naturally enough, ready to accept a salary which would be altogether insufficient for those whose wants are not confined to themselves. Another common enough grievance is,

II. An unsatisfactory appointment of *Trustees*. This may consist on their parts of—a lack of intelligence, and of educational advantages, accompanied however by an excess of self-esteem—a natural disposition of such a kind as to cause frequent disagreement with those appointed to act along with them:—personal habits unfavourable to a correct estimate of the importance of a Teacher's being as far as possible, *blameless*—liability to be swayed in the appointment of a Teacher by family ties, church connection or association with party:—a tendency to allow *pecuniary* considerations undue weight in selecting a Teacher, providing essential school accomodation, or means of study.

If such features of character, and habits will stand in the way of the efficiency of School Trustees, as I believe they must—a chief reason is that, what the School is, and what good it is to be productive of, depends so much on the *Teacher*—and that his appointment is in the hands of the Trustees:—It is surely

then of vital importance, that they be not only men who can discriminate, but who will really employ an undoubtedly good Teacher—if it does cost more than they might get some others for.

I might add that Trustees would do well in the appointment of a Teacher, to endeavor to secure one who has not merely general qualifications, rendering him legally eligible as a Teacher, but such other qualifications as will give a special fitness for taking charge of the particular School he is chosen to.

Teachers who might be quite suitable in some situations, would be as much the reverse in others: The age and sex of the Teacher have to be taken into account—natural temperament as far as it can be ascertained, and maturity and stability of character—on the other hand the general nature of the home training of the children in the Section—the numbers attending the schools, and their probable age and standing.

Another point that should not be disregarded, is that choosing a Teacher is not like drawing a prize or a blank in a lottery, although it may be gone about in as hap-hazard a fashion.

As the possession of a Certificate is one thing, and ability to teach—or the teaching faculty—and ability to govern a school—another and very different thing—and one which a County Board of Examiners can know very little about, there is the more need for School Trustees doing what they can to come at some knowledge of a matter on which to so great an extent a Teacher's success must depend:—and I think it is one which ought to moderate the expectation in point of Salary, of young and inexperienced Teachers, so long as they cannot bring indubitable proof of ability in both respects.

As some County Boards are in the habit of noting on the certificates they give, the proficiency of the Teachers in the several branches of study in which they are examined:—such a scale of attainments should be carefully examined by the Trustees they apply to, who will thus learn, as far as that can show, what they may reasonably expect if they form an engagement:—and, while the practice cannot be too severely censured of Trustees, when they part with a Teacher with whom they have not been satisfied, giving a Certificate which expresses more than their honest convictions, they should exercise proper caution in observing when Certificates of any kind are presented to them, whether of qualification or of character, whether they are complete, or whether and wherein they are deficient. Without any desire on the part of applicants to impose, there may be a desire to obtain employment without being particularly communicative on points in respect whereof others might stand a better chance of success.

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a careful choice of the best men possible as *Trustees*, will help:—a more intelligent selection by them of the best *Teacher* they can get, will help still further:—and yet more will it be so if applicants for Certificates strive to be as thoroughly taught as possible themselves before seeking the position of instructors of others. There will, after all, remain the difficulty arising from the annual change of Trustees;—but were the other points I have recommended, more generally seen to, this would probably not operate as a barrier so much as it sometimes does now.

We cannot expect, I believe, to have a class of permanent Teachers for some time to come: but this is no reason for undervaluing the services of those who are only making a stepping stone of the profession, as it is not uncommon to do on that very ground. If only they are well prepared for the work, and really make it their business while they are engaged in it, I think they should be encouraged in it whatever their ultimate aim may be:—and I can cheerfully testify to the good service done by many such young persons. All I would say is, let them be “well up” in all respects before seeking to make a commencement. A year’s study at a good Grammar School is no bad preparation before entering on the work of teaching: the numbers are smaller there: the pupils can get more attention from a Teacher and have greater opportunity for personal application. The aim to obtain Provincial Certificates is one that should be encouraged. By attendance at the Normal School, in addition to other advantages, if a Certificate is got, it affords a better guarantee of what a Teacher is, in some important respects, that can be given by the strictest County Board in the limited time at its command for examination of applicants.

I may remark further, that the generous provision of the School Law in setting apart a certain number of days in which Teachers may visit other schools, get hints for their own benefit in the schools they teach, and possibly, give some in return, might, I think, very profitably be taken more advantage of. If Trustees of Schools would not merely be ready to authorize these visits; but would go the length of requiring them to be paid for the sake of their own schools, assisting the Teacher (whose salary may be low enough without being encroached on for such a purpose) to visit such and such schools, I am persuaded their own schools would very often reap the benefit. I only add, that while every year there may be School Trustees chosen who are far from being the most suitable, there are some whose services are valuable, and I believe properly appreciated, whose very disadvantages in early life, which they may never have wholly overcome,

have had the effect of intensifying their desire to have a good school established and maintained in their own neighborhood, and led to their being exceedingly useful as School Trustees.

It will matter little however that there are those suitable to act as Trustees, if there is indifference exhibited in the matter of appointment: if the correctly-thinking portion of any community do not make a point of being in their place to prevent such appointments being made as are the result of selfish considerations, and which are frequently so exceedingly detrimental.—The great responsibility after all rests with the electors of the Trustees—the ratepayers of the School Section.



